

Response To Restriction Requirement
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/996,516

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and continued examination of this application are respectfully requested. Prior to discussing the restriction requirement which was set forth in the Office Action dated September 23, 2003, the applicants have amended the claims so that claims 14 and 16 are dependent on claim 18. Full support for the amendment can be found throughout the present application as originally filed including the claims. Accordingly, no questions of new matter should arise and entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendment, claims 1-27 are pending. The applicants note that with respect to amended claims 14 and 16, since these claims are dependent on claim 18, they would be part of Group IV for examination purposes.

In the Office Action, the Examiner sets forth a four-way restriction requirement and requests that applicants elect one group for examination purposes.

In response, the applicants elect Group IV, with traverse, which encompasses claims 18-27 as well as claims 14 and 16. The applicants make this election with traverse. The applicants believe that the subject matter of claims 9-16 as well as 17, 28, and 29, which the Examiner has classified in the same class area, should be examined at this time since it relates to making paper as well as the paper product itself. In addition, claims 1-8 are drawn to the enzyme treated paper sludge which again is similar to the subject matter of the remaining claims which relate to introducing enzyme with sludge for certain purposes. Therefore, there appears to be no serious burden on the part of the Examiner to include all of this subject matter in the examination at this time. In fact, including such subject matter in the same examination would avoid overlapping searches.

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Furthermore, the Examiner at a minimum should combine the subject matter of Group II with Group IV at this time, since this subject matter is interrelated from the standpoint that all of these claims relate to a method of making paper or sizing paper and have similar steps. Accordingly, it would make sense that these groups be examined at this time to avoid duplicating searches. Since the above combination would avoid duplicating searches, it would appear that there would be no serious burden on the Examiner to examine all of the claims at this time, and at a minimum, the Examiner should group the various claims as recommended above.

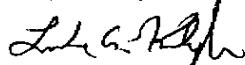
Under M.P.E.P. §803, if there is no serious burden in the examination of all of the claims even if the claims are directed to separate inventions, the Examiner must examine all claims at this time. It would appear that §803 applies to the current situation, and therefore the restriction requirement should be withdrawn and all claims should be examined at this time.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the restriction requirement and the grouping of the claims based on the above and in view of the fact that there appears to be no serious burden on the part of the Examiner to examine all of the claims or at least combine certain groups of claims.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0925. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and should also be charged to said Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,



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